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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5709**

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**State of Washington**

**63rd Legislature**

**2013 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Smith, Ericksen, Sheldon, Holmquist Newbry, Dammeier, Brown, and Roach)

READ FIRST TIME 03/01/13.

1       AN ACT Relating to a pilot program to demonstrate the feasibility  
2 of using densified biomass to heat public schools; and creating new  
3 sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5       NEW SECTION.     **Sec. 1.**     Currently more than a million homes  
6 nationwide and approximately fifty thousand homes in Washington state  
7 are heated with wood pellets, or densified biomass, in modern high-  
8 efficiency appliances. This residential use establishes that many  
9 homeowners experience significant cost savings compared to other fossil  
10 fuel-based heating systems and that this technology can have a wide and  
11 varied acceptance. Bulk delivery that can be facilitated by large  
12 volume anchor users such as schools, institutions, and businesses could  
13 provide the next step in making this form of renewable energy  
14 utilization more efficient and convenient for the consumer. The  
15 legislature makes the following findings:

16       (1) That manufactured and direct thermal conversion of densified  
17 biomass is a renewable energy activity;

18       (2) That much of western Europe, China, Japan, and other Asian

1 countries have chosen to use renewable densified biomass as a renewable  
2 energy fuel to heat homes, businesses, and other facilities;

3 (3) That clean burning, renewable densified biomass will: (a) Lead  
4 our country to energy independence; (b) create jobs; (c) stimulate our  
5 economy by keeping more of our money circulating in the United States;  
6 (d) reduce carbon emissions; (e) improve air quality in noncompliant  
7 air sheds; (f) promote healthy forests; and (g) reduce the volume of  
8 waste in landfills; that the densified biomass industry will be  
9 complimentary to other biofuel industries, providing an outlet and use  
10 for the resultant high lignin by-products and agriculture residuals;  
11 and

12 (4) That a December 2012 report by the Washington State University  
13 energy program identified opportunities to develop and expand the in-  
14 state manufacturing of densified biomass.

15 Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to have the  
16 Washington State University energy program conduct a pilot program to  
17 demonstrate the feasibility of using densified biomass as a renewable  
18 energy source to heat schools and other buildings.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) Subject to receiving federal and private  
20 funds for this purpose, by December 1, 2013, the Washington State  
21 University energy program must develop and initiate a pilot program to  
22 demonstrate the feasibility of using densified biomass to heat public  
23 schools. One public school must be chosen for the pilot program, using  
24 the following criteria: The school's proximity to a currently  
25 operating densified biomass manufacturing facility, the age and  
26 condition of the school's current heating system, and the school's  
27 design is of a nature that most resembles other schools of its class.  
28 The pilot program must consist of the following: The replacement of  
29 the school's current heating system with one that uses densified  
30 biomass as a fuel; the measurement and evaluation of the heating  
31 system, including a cost comparison with other conventional fuels; and  
32 the measurement of emissions from the heating system.

33 (2) By December 31, 2015, the Washington State University energy  
34 program must summarize and report its findings to the legislature. The  
35 report must include an analysis extrapolating the results to other  
36 similarly situated schools in the state.

1           (3) In designing the pilot program, the Washington State University  
2 energy program must seek to leverage other existing private and federal  
3 funding programs and resources.

4           (4) The Washington State University energy program may contract  
5 with other entities for assistance in implementing the pilot program.

6           (5) The pilot program expires December 15, 2015.

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